

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 31, 32, 35, 37, 40, 43, 45, 49, and 50 are currently pending, with Claims 5, 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 31, 32, 35, 37, 40, 43, and 45 withdrawn as directed to non-elected inventions. Claims 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 31, 32, 35, and 40 have been amended; and Claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19-25, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 46, and 47 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 14, 15, 49, and 50 were allowed. In addition, the Examiner indicated that withdrawn Claims 3-13 and 16-47 should be cancelled.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview granted Applicants' representative on March 4, 2005. At that time, based on the Amendment filed February 2, 2005, the Examiner indicated that Claims 1, 2, 14, 15, 49, and 50 were in condition for allowance and requested authorization for an Examiner's Amendment canceling withdrawn Claims 3-13 and 16-47. However, after reviewing the withdrawn claims, Applicants' representative indicated that many of the withdrawn claims should be allowed based on the indicated allowability of Claims 1, 2, 14, and 15. The Examiner agreed to consider a response setting forth the reasons that some of the withdrawn claims should be allowed. Those reasons are set forth below.

Withdrawn Claims 7 and 26 depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, based on the Examiner's indication that Claim 1 will be allowed, Applicants respectfully submit that withdrawn Claims 7 and 26 should be allowed. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 5, 10, 17, 31, and 35 recite limitations analogous to the limitations

recited in allowed Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 5, 10, 17, 31, and 35 have been amended in a manner analogous to the previous amendments to Claim 1. Accordingly, based on the indicated allowability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 5 (and dependent Claims 11 and 28), Claim 10, Claim 17 (and dependent Claim 18), Claim 31 (and dependent Claims 32, 37, and 43), and Claim 35 (and dependent Claims 40 and 45) should be allowed.

In particular, Applicants note that while Claim 1 recites coding means, withdrawn Claim 5 recites a plurality of coding means, but that otherwise Claims 1 and amended Claim 5 recite analogous limitations. Further, Applicants note that Claim 10 is directed to a medium recording a code string prepared by a moving image coding apparatus, but otherwise recites the limitations recited in Claim 1. Further, Claim 17 is directed to a recording medium for executing a computer program comprising steps analogous to the steps recited in allowed Claim 14. Similarly, independent Claims 31 and 35 are non-means-plus-function equivalents of Claims 1 and 5. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 5, 10, 17, 31, and 35 (and all associated dependent claims) should be allowed based on the indicated allowability of Claims 1 and 14.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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